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THE CESNOLA COLLECTION

SECOND PRELIMINARY (INTERIM) REPORT

THE further progress which has now been made with the examination and rearrangement of the Cesnola Collection of Cypriote Antiquities permits a general forecast of the results.

First, as to selection and arrangement of exhibits. The very large size of the collection has always made it impossible to expose all the objects for general study; and in proportion as the artistic value of the more important pieces is more fully appreciated, the need for greater space becomes more obvious, if justice is to be done to each of these. It has therefore been decided to separate the collection into two parts, one of which, consisting of the finest specimens of each kind of workmanship, will be treated as a series of typical examples, and retained on view in the present gallery on the ground floor of the Museum; while the other, which will contain the many large series of objects of almost monotonous similarity, will be transferred to a less public gallery, easily accessible from the former, and more convenient for the special purposes of expert students. Here it is intended to install gradually exhibits illustrating particular aspects of the ancient arts and industries of Cyprus, and thus to make the fullest use of the unrivaled mass of material which the collection contains.

The preparation of these more strictly technological exhibits is naturally a work of some time. In the meanwhile it has been held to be of the first importance to restore to public use as soon as possible those parts of the collection which are of the most general and popular interest.

The series of typical vases which has been selected for exhibition consists of about 2,000 examples. It will occupy the whole of the seventy-eight wall cases of the west and south walls of the gallery, together with eight large floor cases. In the latter are collected a small number of the largest and most important vases of each successive style; and by this means it is

possible to do justice to the fine groups of Mycenaean and Orientalizing vases, in which the collection is so rich.

A similar range of cases on the east wall of the gallery, and on the walls of the northern annex, is assigned to the Type series of Cypriote sculpture, which is supplemented, in the same way as the vases, by floor cases containing the larger heads and busts, and a selection of the largest terracotta heads. The life-size statues which formerly filled the middle of the Cypriote Gallery will in future be redistributed in three groups, round the central piers, and considerably reduced in number, corresponding provision being made in the Student's Collection downstairs for the statues withdrawn from above. The great sarcophagi and sculptured tombs and tombstones will in future be grouped together in the northern annex of the same gallery, under more favorable conditions of light and space than has been possible hitherto.

All the sculpture and most of the painted vases have been found on examination to need thorough and careful cleaning. In some cases, original incrustations of Cypriote earth and calcareous deposit had been left in place, when the objects were first brought to the Museum; in others, subsequent accumulations of dust and other obstructions have disguised the details of the workmanship, or the existence of cracks and joints. It was already known that many objects had required and received minor repairs of various kinds, before they could be put on exhibition at all; and care has been taken to determine exactly in the process of cleaning, the precise extent of these repairs. In general, however, it may be repeated already, that the appearance of the statues is very little affected by the process. The chief changes in their aspect are due to the recovery of the mellow cream-colored tones of the soft native limestone of which the statues are made; and to the discovery in many instances, of clear and even copious traces of their original coloring. One of the most notable pieces in the collection, for example, the well-known "Priest with the Dove," is found to have many marks of red borders and designs on the drapery, besides decoration in red, black, and yellow

on the helmet, and traces of red color on the lips. Some of the Orientalizing statues were also brightly colored originally, and the same practice persisted in the Cypriote art of the fifth and fourth centuries, and perhaps even later still.

Similar color appears on some of the decorative tombstones; and the appearance of the latter has been greatly improved by careful remounting so as to show their original height and general design.

The preparation of a general guide to the whole collection has been greatly facilitated by the detailed studies of which a summary has been given above; and it is hoped that it may be possible to make this guide public not long after the reopening of the collection itself to the public.

JOHN L. MYRES.

RECENT LOANS

MR. J. PIERPONT MORGAN has increased his important lendings to the Museum by three pictures which he has recently bought. One of these, "Saint Theresa praying for the Souls in Purgatory" by Rubens is a sketch for, or a replica of the large picture painted for the altar of the Chapel of Saint Theresa in the church of the Bare-footed Friars in Antwerp, which is now exhibited in the Museum of that city. Although Mr. Morgan's painting is usually termed the sketch for the altar-piece, its exceedingly careful and highly finished execution, which is unusual in Rubens's sketches, points to the supposition that it was painted as a picture and not as a preparation for another work. The condition of the painting is remarkably good, no retouches being evident, and the color having seemingly lost none of its brilliancy.

The picture shows Saint Theresa, who is dressed as a nun, kneeling at the side of the Christ. He is half nude and holds loosely about his figure a vermillion robe which gives the dominant color to the work, which is otherwise largely made up of rich browns and transparent grays. In the foreground are four figures, two men and two women, the heads and shoulders only being visi-

ble, with the flames of Purgatory burning about them. There are also three Cupid-like cherubs, one in the clouds and two flying to the assistance of the sufferers.

The other pictures are likewise of great interest. The panel by the Bruges Master of the Legend of Saint Ursula (so called from his series of pictures in the cloister of the Black Sisters at Bruges) represents the Madonna and Child. It recalls similar treatments of the subject by the School of Van der Weyden, although it has been shown that the artist was a pupil of Memling. The Madonna, a purely Flemish type, is preparing to suckle her Child, who lies rather stiffly in her arms. He is unclothed and there is an effort toward realism in the strange movements of his hands and feet. The rich reds and deep blues of the Virgin's costume make a handsome effect against the gold background.

The third picture is a triptych by Herri Met de Bles, in an excellent state of preservation. The subject of the center panel is the Last Supper, which is represented as taking place in the interior of a Flemish church. From two richly ornamented capitals hangs a brocade which serves as background for the principal group, remotely influenced in posture and type by Leonardo. The characterizations are somewhat forced and there is great liveliness throughout. With some exceptions where a more reverent feeling is shown, the apostles seem to talk interestedly as they sup and at one side is seen a gayly dressed serving boy.

The left wing shows a warrior kneeling before a fantastically dressed personage, who offers him bread and drink. Behind are figures, a group of soldiers and the view of a town. The scene represents Melchizedek giving bread and wine to Abraham on his return from the wars.

On the right wing is an illustration of the falling of the Manna in the wilderness. Moses, distinguished by the traditional horns, is watching the Israelites as they hold up baskets and mantles to catch the food. The scene is treated with unaffected simplicity but the technical achievement is not so great as in the corresponding panel on the other side. In subject the side panels